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SWISS LEGATION
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Dear Mr. Attorney,

In reply to your inquiries of 28th last month and 3rd of this month, I take the honor to inform you that the Swiss Political Department has empowered me to make the following statement in connection with the defense of the former General of the Waffen-SS Gottlob Berger:

In execution of a mission, assigned to me by the Swiss Political Department, I left Switzerland on 26 April 1945 for Bad-Gastein and went to Salzburg on the following day for the protection of military and civilian personnel who were held prisoners by Germany, and who were citizens of countries the interests of which Switzerland had represented during the war with respect to the Reich.

On 28 April 1945 I visited the Camp Laufen near Salzburg, inspecting a special group, predominantly Anglo-Saxon prisoners-of-war. I was agreed with the local German military authorities that the prisoners would remain in the camp until the American troops arrived. Contrary to the given assurances, however, the group of prisoners, three days later, was taken from Laufen to Camp Markt Pongau where again I visited them. I submitted the request to the German Camp Commander now to entrust the prisoners of war in question directly to my care since their security did no longer appear to be sufficiently guaranteed in the camp.

The Camp Commander refused to grant this request emphasizing the fact that he vouched for the prisoners with his life, and that their release could only be effected on orders from SS-General Berger. As I knew that orders had been given by "supreme Authority" to transfer the members of this prominent group to the interior of the country, and the danger existed that, in the final hour, they might be treated like hostages, in disregard of the provisions of the Geneva Convention, I requested information about General Berger's headquarters and immediately departed from Markt Pongau, accompanied by the German Major Plesch, to see General Berger in St. Johann in Tyrol. This was the day when Innsbruck was occupied by American forces and, as a result of the retreating troops and vehicles, it was very difficult to make any headway on the roads. I succeeded, even before

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sundown, in reaching General Berger in Kirchdorf near St. Johann where he had established his quarters in a house-trailer. He invited me for supper and, in a lengthy conversation which lasted till about midnight, I thoroughly explained to him the reasons speaking for the immediate release of the group. General Berger showed understanding for my considerations by emphasizing on his own part the dangers threatening the group in case of a prolonged stay within the German sphere of authority, dangers which were particularly in evidence from the part of Kaltenbrunner. We also discussed the technical possibilities of retransportation to the homeland which had to be effected by way of Switzerland or through the Allies.

General Berger gave his assurance that he would assist us in obtaining a car and the escorting personnel for the transport.

On the following day, May 4th, having returned to Bad-Gastein the same night, I sent my attache Buchmueller, with whom I kept in constant telephone connection, to the Pongau camp. He found that General Berger had instructed the camp commander to permit the removal of the prisoners. After some difficulties had been overcome, two vehicles were made available so that on the same evening the prisoners were enabled to leave Markt Pongau on their trip to freedom, accompanied by Herr Buchmueller, a German doctor and two German drivers.

On the same day, Colonel Meurer called on me in Bad-Gastein in order to inform me of the departure at the request of General Berger.

Prior to the departure, the group of prisoners were taken to General Berger who gave them overnight accommodations in his quarters and made an address.

In the early hours of May 5th the group continued its journey and was enabled to enter the American lines directly before Innsbruck.

The Swiss Attache Buchmueller was given permission to return with one of the German drivers to Bad-Gastein where he arrived on 7 May and submitted his report to me.

I am agreed that the foregoing statement will be treated as a statement given in lieu of oath.

Please accept the assurance of my deepest respect.

THE SWISS AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRIA:

signed: Feldscher

Dr. Peter Anton Feldscher
Ambassador and Authorized Minister.

Certified true copy.

Nuernberg, 7 April 1948

Signed: Dr. Georg Froeschmann
Attorney